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=DJ Mentor Dn-2:FDA Criminal Probe Of Breast-Implant Studies

NEW YORK (Dow Jones)--Shares of Mentor Corp. (MNTR) were down as much as 40% Thursday morning after USA Today reported that the breast-implant manufacturer was being investigated by the Food and Drug Administration.

The criminal probe of the Santa Barbara, Calif., company concerns allegations of serious irregularities in breast-implant studies, the newspaper said.

Mentor's general counsel said the allegations were without merit, according to USA Today. Calls to Mentor weren't answered Thursday morning.

Shares of Mentor dipped as low as 17 1/2 Thursday, above the 52-week low of 9 3/8 set April 13.

Before trading was halted to allow investors to digest the news, shares of Mentor were down 12 1/16, or 35.4%, at 22 on composite volume of 2.9 million shares, compared with average daily volume of 150,000.

-Dwight Oestricher; Dow Jones Newswires; 201-938-5266
dwight.oestricher@dowjones.com

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